

the most logical is that of H. R. P. Dickson, who says in his *The Arab of the Desert* that the name is derived from the Indian boat called "Gallevat" which is in turn derived from the Portuguese "Galeote" or Galley. 501 396

The type of craft most used for pearling in Bahrain is the Sambuq, which has a long finely curved bow and a square stern. It has two masts and is usually fully decked. Another boat of the same type is the Shu'ai, which only differs from the Sambuq in the shape of the stern piece. A second boat with Portuguese connections is the Baghala, a large craft with a comparatively short curved stern-piece. The Baghala has a distinctive square stern set with windows, which, although often false, give the stern the appearance of an old fashioned European man-of-war. The largest boat now being built is the Boom, which can be identified by its long straight stern-piece and its stern, set about 10° from the vertical.

Boats are not built on the scale of former days, for the decline of the pearling industry and the development of the fast launch have reduced the demand for the large old-fashioned sailing boats. Launches need a smaller crew, they are more useful for work between steamers and the shore and over short distances, and are now in many other ways a more satisfactory investment than sailing boats.

Many small types of boats are used around the shores of Bahrain for fishing and for carrying passengers between the islands. Some of these are built like miniature sambuq, while others have the vertical bow of the jalibut. There is also the huri, a primitive canoe hollowed out of the trunk of a tree and imported from Africa for use as a ship's dinghy. An entirely local product is the huwairiyah, a craft built of date stems tightly tied together with date fibre and soaked in fish oil. These little boats, which if well made are entirely water-proof, can carry a man or two boys and are used for fishing and ferrying.

A question that always confuses visitors to Bahrain is the word "dhow"; this name, originally unknown to the Arabs, is used by Europeans to include all Persian Gulf sailing boats, and has become so general that Arabs, finding the word useful, are now beginning to use it themselves.

The craftsmen who make the boats of Bahrain have an interesting sideline, they make perfect miniature models of the large sailing boats, not only of the ones at present in use but also of the obsolete types, and these can be purchased from them and make interesting ornaments in the house or souvenirs of Bahrain. [523]

JUS

"Jus," the Arabic for gypsum, has always been used for building purposes in Bahrain; the pre-historic tombs are lined with it and it was used for the construction of the 10th century mosque at the Suq al-Khamis. It is found in slabs below the ground and is collected in many places in Bahrain, in Lozi, from the desert north of Awali and from the Howar Islands. The gypsum is often prepared on the spot where it 316 339

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is quarried, lorry loads of wood are brought out, and, as in the manufacture of lime, layers of gypsum are interspersed with layers of wood and the pile fired. The slabs of gypsum are then removed and beaten into a fine powder which, when mixed with water, acts like cement. It has the advantage of being quick setting and is still used by those who cannot afford to buy imported cement.

WEAVING

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Weaving is carried on in some of the villages of Bahrain, in Abu Saiba, south of the Budaiya Road and elsewhere. "Awzars," simple garments worn by the villagers around their waists in the summer, are woven from imported cotton, while in many coastal villages the sailors spend the winters weaving sail-cloth. The prisoners on Jidda Island are also employed in weaving, on imported Irish looms, but their activities can hardly be classed as a local industry.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ANTIQUITIES OF BAHRAIN

THE WORLD'S LARGEST GRAVEYARD

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The tumuli of Bahrain have never been counted, but their number has been estimated at 50,000. In these tumuli Bahrain possesses one of the unsolved mysteries of archaeology, for despite the numerous expeditions that have been made to discover their origin, this is still in dispute.

There are three groups of tumuli in Bahrain. The largest group is that which lies on the plain between Aali and the Rifaas. The second group is to the far north of Bahrain, on each side of the Manama-Budaiya Road between Jidhafs and Diraz. The third group, consisting of a few dozen graves, is in the clearing to the north of the Suq al-Khamis Mosque.

The first group of tombs is daily passed by hundreds of people travelling between Manama and Aali, but the best examples of tumuli in this group are not along the main road but are near the village of Aali. These mounds are the largest in Bahrain and while some of them are used by the villagers for baking their pottery, the majority are just as they were left after their opening by various archaeologists. Most of these tombs face south-west and P. B. Cornwall¹ has suggested that the reason for this is that the builders of the mounds worshipped the Evening Star, Venus, which at sunset lies to the south-west. The majority of the tumuli have two storeys and, in the chamber tombs, there are niches cut into the sides of the passages. The sides and roofs of the graves themselves are of local stone and were originally covered with a layer of gypsum. Some of the tumuli are surrounded by low walls of mud and gravel. Finds in these tumuli have included the bones of men and animals, ivory statues, pieces of circular boxes, golden ornaments and earthenware vessels decorated with black stripes.

There is little agreement among the experts as to the origin and dating of these burials and each has drawn his own deductions from the

of the Egg," a small village with many seafaring inhabitants. To the north of Sitra there is a very pleasant sandy beach looking towards Umm a-Hasan where there is excellent bathing; the view also includes Nabih Salih and Jaziya. There is deep water to the north of Sitra, and it is here that the Bahrain Government is building the new Port of Manama with a pier running into deep water from the shore between Umm al-Hasan and Jufair. (361) (504)

JIDDA

This island is about 2½ miles from Budaiya. It is small and rocky and in appearance unlike any of the other Bahrain Islands. Its high cliffs rise abruptly from the water and a few fort-like buildings are silhouetted against the sky-line. On the south side of the island there is a level strip of land which is extensively cultivated. Jidda is Bahrain's penal settlement; here all long term prisoners are detained, spending their time cutting stone, weaving and working in the gardens. There is a small house on the top of the cliffs above the jetty which catches all the wind in the summer and which is used by the Adviser to the Bahrain Government. Being a prison island, Jidda is forbidden to general visitors. (101) (133) (697) (486)

The stone quarries at Jidda are of great age and it is likely that the large stones which line the graves in the burial mounds were cut here. There is an Arabic inscription roughly cut on one of the cliffs which reads as follows : (316)

"During the month of Shaban in the year 968 (April/May, 1561) there was completed the cutting of the 100,000th rock for the mending of the tower of the Bahrain fort in the wazirate of the Great Wazir Jilal ad-Din Murad Mahmud by the hand of the slave . . ." (a few words after this are unreadable).

UMM AN-NASAAN

This, the second largest of the Bahrain islands, lies a few miles across the shallow water to the south of Jidda. It is sandy and flat, with the exception of two small limestone hills towards its centre which break the monotony of its shape. At the north end of the island there are several natural springs and artesian wells from which extensive date gardens are irrigated; they were planted by the late Ruler of Bahrain, H.H. Shaikh Hamed, who also established on the island a herd of black buck and gazelle, the former being imported from India and the latter from the mainland of Bahrain. (101) (133) (312) (136)

There is evidence of ancient habitations on Umm an-Nasan, foundations of many old houses are visible and sherds of pottery can be picked up. Local legend has it that Nasaan, after whom the island is named, was one of the early rulers of Bahrain, but this legend has not been substantiated by historical research. (172)